

The Strategy

A Strategy That Works!

Pentecost Sunday has been promoted in recent years for UPCI churches to rally around in a concerted outreach effort. For several years, our local church has used these strategies with great success. The following is an outline used in our Pentecost Sunday Plan of Action.

Divide & Conquer

Begin by compiling a list of all church members and dividing them into teams who will work together to prepare a certain number of souls to receive the Holy Ghost. Each team should consist of a Team Captain (who will regularly contact each team member to check on their progress), a Team Secretary and at least 12-15 church members. Any more than 15 members per team could make it complicated for the Team Captain to keep up with.

- ◆ Team Captain -- a team captain can be a minister, elder, aspiring minister, a lay minister, a well-grounded church member, or a faithful church member with some leadership ability.
- ◆ Team Secretary -- a church member who is efficient in maintaining for the Team Captain the information shared at the team tag-in meetings.

Assign everyone to a team, from the leadership to the unsaved guest. One of the greatest ways to bring momentum to a congregation is for everyone to rally around a common objective.

Divide the congregation, either by alphabetical order or randomly. Insure each team is fairly balanced in regard to the evangelistic tendencies of its members.

This is a great way to mobilize the church into evangelism. No one feels alone, but rather feels part of a team effort, working together in the harvest.

The Goal

For this Pentecost Sunday Drive to work there must be an overall church goal for the number of people to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The Pastor may have a goal that he feels in his heart from the Lord. He will first meet with his top leadership before the kickoff to discuss the goal, then with the next level of leadership (i.e., departmental staff) to get their feed back. He continues until he reaches the church member. The Pastor must have vision and faith to believe God for the greatest Holy Ghost outpouring ever in the history of the

church. He must transfer that vision and faith to every church leader and member.

Once the total church goal is established, divide it by the number of teams you have in place. That will give each team their goal to reach for. If the church goal is fifty and there are ten teams, each team's goal is five (each team is responsible to prepare five souls for Pentecost Sunday). A team of 12-15 members can easily prepare five souls to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Dividing and conquering the total church goal in this way makes each member believe it is possible to attain, motivates them to do their part in reaching each team's goal, and ultimately results in achieving or exceeding the total church goal.

Youth & Children's Teams

To have even more success, rally the youth and children to be part of this Pentecost Sunday endeavor. If there is adequate space, have separate Pentecost Sunday services for the youth and the children. It would be good to schedule Youth and/or Children's Evangelists to conduct a mini-Holy Ghost Rally for each group.

Set numerical goals for the youth and children to receive the Holy Ghost. To do this, begin by having Youth and Sunday School staff determine and establish goals for each age group. Divide each group into teams, as with the adults, and assign each team a numerical goal to reach for. When determining these class goals, include the number of children and youth who need to receive the Holy Ghost. Then by faith, add to those figures, considering the classmates and friends that younger members can bring, as well as bus children and guests.

The Kickoff

At the Pentecost Sunday Kickoff, display team rosters on an overhead screen, on a side wall or on the bulletin board so your members can see which team they are on as they leave that night.

The Kickoff should be held at a time when most church members will be present, at least two months before Pentecost Sunday. Because each church is different, adjust this date according to what works best for the individual church.

The Pastor must enthusiastically promote the Pentecost Sunday drive. He needs to review the details of the promotion and challenge the congregation to believe God for a great outpouring of His Spirit. The Pastor should already have the support of his leadership. Get the input of these leaders to create a sense of ownership. Then reveal the goal that the leadership feels can be attained.

All in-house promotional items should be printed and ready for this service (discussed later in this instructional manual).

Preparing the Church

Planning Meetings

For the drive to be successful, the Pastor must first review this manual thoroughly, and then select the leaders (Assistant Pastor, Youth Pastor, Local Ministers, Sunday School Superintendent, etc.) to contact initially. He should then schedule a preliminary meeting with those leaders to review every point in this manual and plan accordingly.

The following must be determined during this meeting:

- ◆ Total church numerical goal for Holy Ghost infillings
- ◆ Number of teams and team members for each
- ◆ Team Captain and Secretary for each team
- ◆ A timeline and calendar
- ◆ A things-to-do list for all involved

Schedule another meeting on an off-night with these leaders, the team captains and secretaries to discuss the plan of action.

It is recommended that the Team Captain meet with his designated team at least three times before the drive is over. This is what we call a Team Tag-In meeting. This allows the Team Captain to make the members of his team accountable to him. He should challenge and motivate his team to reach their goal by preparing people to receive the Holy Ghost. He should ask them for a list of prospects, and what evangelism tools they will be using to prepare their prospects to receive the Holy Ghost and record this information on the "Pentecost Sunday Tag-In Meeting Form" (see Helpful Forms Section). This causes positive peer pressure and encourages everyone to get involved in reaching their team goal.

The Team Captain should also offer his or her service in helping them prepare their guest for Pentecost Sunday. There may be someone in the group who can teach a Home Bible Study to a guest of another member. The key is working together for this one objective.

In our local church's Pentecost Sunday drive, we schedule these meetings during our Sunday evening service (for churches with only one service, it is suggested that these meetings be held after service). During the preliminaries, we break out into our respective teams. Each team meets in a different area (classrooms, offices, etc.) of the church facility. We found that this works most effectively.

Hospitality Ministry

The most important people on Pentecost Sunday are the guests. The second-most important people on Pentecost Sunday are those who work in the Hospitality ministry of the church (ushers, greeters, hosts, hostesses, etc.). The Hospitality Coordinator should choose the most personable and cheerful people for ushering, greeting and parking lot attendants. It may be necessary to beef up Hospitality staff for this special Sunday. Schedule a training session for Hospitality staff at least two weeks before Pentecost Sunday to go over all the basics and instruction on how to handle the guests and increased crowd.

*Recommended reading: Usher and Greeter training course by John Maxwell (available from General Home Missions Division).

Nursery

The Nursery staff are the third-most important people on this Sunday. A well-staffed and efficiently run Nursery will put guest parents at ease. This will enable them to concentrate on the service, and not on their baby in the Nursery. What a great feeling it is to know that some of those who received the Holy Ghost on this Sunday were parents whose babies were being cared for in the Nursery.

Music

Music is a vital part of any Pentecostal church. The music needs to be at its' best on this Sunday. We know praise and worship are vital in ushering us into the presence of God. Music enhances our ability to praise and worship God from the heart, and prepares the heart of the guest for the Word of God. The Word will inspire faith, and faith -- among the saints and among the guests -- is a requirement for anyone to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

It is recommended that the Music Director schedule several extra practices with the worship leader, musicians and praise singers, beginning at least two weeks prior to Pentecost Sunday, to select and fine tune the songs which will be used. This will give the musicians and singers sufficient confidence that they know the songs, allowing them to give themselves to worship as they sing, rather than focusing on whether they are singing the right words or notes. Use worship choruses and special songs (solos, trios, choir, etc.) that specifically mention the "Holy Ghost" and/or songs that directly ministers to a guest in regards to their need of Him.

Altar Workers

Trained altar workers are vital to a Holy Ghost service. A great deal of effort is put into the preparation for this grand day and we must not fail at the

altar. It's like a mother carrying a child for nine months, but having no one prepared or qualified to assist her in delivering her newborn at the time of birth.

An Altar Workers' Training Session is highly recommended, and should be held within two weeks of Pentecost Sunday. Open this session to anyone in the church who wishes to help pray people through on Pentecost Sunday. (Having this session two weeks' prior to Pentecost Sunday will give the church member several services in which to get comfortable in the altar using the techniques taught in the training.)

The Pastor may want to invite an outside minister to come and teach on this subject. Materials are also available from the Home Missions Division. Make this ministry one of the highest priorities in your planning.

Guest Follow-Up

If a Follow-Up team is already in place, Pentecost Sunday will require adding staff to it. If there is not a team structure, it is vital that staff be enlisted to make phone calls to the guests who attend Pentecost Sunday services.

Schedule a planning meeting with your Follow-Up Team a week prior to Pentecost Sunday to polish follow-up skills, for instruction on conducting the follow-up contacts, and to reinforce follow-up procedures.

Church Etiquette

Prior to Pentecost Sunday, the Pastor should address some points on church etiquette as it relates to guests. This is best done when the most church members are present. The church should be instructed on how to treat the guests that come into our place of worship. Church members should be encouraged to come early and stay late to greet and make the guests feel welcome. The Pentecost Sunday service is not to minister to the church member, but for the church member to minister to the unsaved guest. This purpose should be repeatedly stressed to the church body in the weeks leading up to Pentecost Sunday.

A good resource for church etiquette is "The People Business" taught by Jack Cunningham, General Home Missions Director (available from the Home Missions Division).

Speaking Faith

The Pastor must speak in faith that God is going to do what he said he would in these last days -- pour out His Spirit. He should express faith first to the church's ministerial leadership, and encourage them to do likewise. Faith must be transmitted to every level of leadership until it reaches the ground roots -- the

church member. Church members should be encouraged to verbalize faith to one another and dismiss any doubt. Faith should be building as you move closer to Pentecost Sunday. Speaking faith, "God is going to do it!", creates a spirit of expectancy.

During one of our own Pentecost Sunday endeavors, church members started verbalizing their faith. At the beginning of the service, faith was so thick, it seemed you could reach out and grab it! This created the proper climate for people to believe God for the most wonderful gift anyone could receive.

This is not just practicing a positive mental attitude, but it is speaking faith in a promise that God, who cannot lie, declared to the prophet Joel, and again to the apostle Peter -- *"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."*

Another good way to inspire faith is to read reports of Holy Ghost outpourings in North America and on foreign fields. If there are videos available of any of these happenings, it would be good to show the congregation. I have ordered videos of Holy Ghost crusades to show our congregation to broaden their prospective and provoke faith. Also photos of these services can be projected on an overhead screen or put out on display so the church members can see them. These positive reports will begin to expand faith in the church to believe God for His sovereign move.

Training The Church On How to Prepare The Harvest

Before reaping the harvest on Pentecost, the church must be trained to prepare the harvest. *Do not take for granted that church members know what to do!* Many of them will know, but for the most part, the saints must be trained repeatedly on how to prepare souls to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

It is very helpful to use the midweek services to prepare the congregation. Teaching the following sessions will build the saints' confidence in their ability to handle the harvest that will be reaped on Pentecost Sunday:

1. Personal Evangelism (how to witness, how to share your faith)
2. Home Bible Studies (effectively teaching a one- or two-day Home Bible Study)
3. How to Prepare Your Guest to Receive the Holy Ghost
4. How to Effectively Use the "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost" Video (by Shelley Hendricks)
5. Altar Work (assisting people to receive the Holy Ghost at the altar)

Preparing the Harvest

This Pentecost Sunday drive is a *team effort*. Everyone must do their part. More often than not, church members invite their friends to church without preparing them for what God wants to do for them in the service. Churches often put all the pressure on the preacher to somehow get the unprepared guest to the altar. This is unrealistic. The church member must work together with their pastor to effectively reap a harvest. Every guest that comes to this Pentecost Sunday should be *prepared* to receive the Holy Ghost.

We cannot reap a Harvest that doesn't exist. If there's no one in need of the Holy Ghost, no one will receive it. If there are 10 present that need the Holy Ghost, 25 are not going to receive it. The reason 120 received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost was because 120 were present who needed it! Furthermore, if those people present are not *prepared* to receive the Holy Ghost, the chances of them receiving it are drastically reduced. However, many will be moved on by the Word and Spirit of God, and will recognize they need the Holy Ghost. So to *insure* a successful Pentecost Sunday service, *train your congregation to prepare the Harvest*. This cannot be overstressed.

The following are some of the tools that we use in our local church, and have also been proven successful in other churches:

1. Home Bible Studies -- the one- or two-day Bible Studies work best for us. They are simple, brief and to the point, and are very effective in preparing people for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. "The New Birth Experience", written by Mike Blankenship, is a great tool. Of course, the 10- or 12-week Home Bible Study can be started, but it is crucial that the lessons are scheduled properly. For example, if the teacher is using Exploring God's Word, insure that the fourth lesson on the tabernacle is taught a week or two before Pentecost Sunday. The teacher can elaborate on the Holy Ghost when teaching about the Holy of Holies. This would be a wonderful time to prepare the student to receive the Holy Ghost. The 10- or 12-week Home Bible Study can be offered to reach a larger group during an off- night at the church. Many feel a little more comfortable with this than opening their home.
2. "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost" Video (Taught by Shelley Hendricks) -- This video has been used very effectively in our local church. Saints have visited friends' homes and viewed the video together. When it is finished, the church member can answer any questions the prospect may have. Another way is to lend them the video and have them watch it on their own. With a Bible in hand as they watch the video in the privacy of their own home, the Spirit of God will begin to speak to their heart. Insure that the church

member follows up on their friend. This video can be helpful to those who are new in the church and feel uncomfortable teaching their friends about the Holy Ghost.

3. “How To Receive The Baptism Of The Holy Ghost” Handout - We have put together a brief booklet on how to receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. This booklet comes in handy if the church member cannot commit their friend (who is coming to Pentecost Sunday) to a Home Bible Study or to watch the Holy Ghost Video.

It is suggested that these materials be ordered several weeks ahead in order to have adequate supplies on hand for church members to use in preparing their guests to receive the Holy Ghost.

Promoting with Purpose

Promoting Within The Church

What gets promoted gets results. The Pastor must insure that he and the Sunday School Superintendent promote this Pentecost Sunday drive every chance they get. There is no such thing as too much promotion. The promotion needs to be done creatively and enthusiastically.

Every avenue must be used to promote this Pentecost Sunday drive. The following are some suggestions:

1. Posters & Flyers -- color flyers or black-and-white on color paper (See Promotional Suggestions)
 - A. Post them in key areas of the church facilities (sanctuary, hallways, bulletin boards, classrooms, etc.)
 - B. Post before the Kick-off service
 - C. Smaller flyers should be given to the church members to use as invitations
2. Sunday School Bulletins -- each Sunday for a month prior to Pentecost Sunday, the front page of the Sunday School bulletin should be used to promote Pentecost Sunday
 - A. Also use small insert flyers with the bulletin as often as possible
3. Bookmarks -- these are printed and passed out to church members to keep in their Bibles, reminding them to work on their guests and to pray for Pentecost Sunday (see “Promotional Suggestions” section)

4. Banner with the current Pentecost Sunday logo (available from Home Missions)
 - A. Have it up before the Kick-off service
 - B. Keeps Pentecost Sunday in the minds of the saints
5. Service Promotions -- should be done as often as possible. Insure every Sunday School teacher promotes it in their class.

Promoting Outside The Church

- ❖ The most effective “outside” promotion is done one-on-one by the church member. The greatest method of evangelism is the personal one-on-one style.
 - ◆ Print invitational flyers for saints to pass out to friends, family members, neighbors and associates (see Promotional Suggestions)
 - ◆ Print door hangers for saints to distribute throughout their neighborhoods to notify the community of Pentecost Sunday services
 - ◆ Send letters to infrequent church attendees and guests who have visited the church within the past 6 months
- ❖ Thousands of dollars have been spent promoting Pentecost Sunday on the radio, and with newspaper ads and inserts. In our area, very little success has been achieved using these public promotional endeavors for Pentecost Sunday.
 - ◆ These types of advertisement will help the church be known in the community, which is vital. However, it is not pertinent to the success of the Pentecost Sunday drive. Of course, if you have funds to spare for extra advertisement, do so.

Prayer - A Must

The church must under gird this evangelistic drive with prayer. Study your church calendar and see where you can possibly include prayer for Pentecost Sunday.

The following are some suggestions to execute prayer in your assembly:

1. Have prayer in every service for at least one month prior to Pentecost Sunday.
2. If there is a weekly prayer meeting, insure that prayer is made for this great day.

3. Take the 50 days from Easter to Pentecost and ask for volunteers (or designate) so there is at least one person per day praying and fasting for Pentecost Sunday.
 4. Designate two or three days of prayer and fasting for the entire church.
 5. Have one or two all-night prayer meetings.
 6. Have special prayer during leadership meetings.
 7. Initiate Neighborhood Prayer Walks, either in prayer teams or by church members on an individual basis (see Prayer Walk Bulletin in “Promotional Suggestions” section).
 8. Schedule an all-night prayer meeting with ministers and elders the Friday night before Pentecost Sunday. This will be a good time to seek the face of God for the greatest outpouring of His Spirit. A time of genuine repentance should be directed during this time. Everyone should be in one mind and one accord.
 9. The Saturday before Pentecost Sunday a one-hour, all-church, guided prayer meeting should be planned. This is preferably done in the evening, dismissing early enough for church members to go home and call their guest(s) to remind them of and insure they will be in Pentecost Sunday services.
- ❖ It is suggested that there be some instruction to the church on praying for the lost (i.e., intercessory prayer, praying for the city, etc.). This is ideally done in midweek services.
 - ❖ All this prayer builds faith for what God is going to do!

The Service - Executing it Effectively

The actual Pentecost Sunday service is the climax of all your efforts. The church has been laboring for months to insure this day is a success. It is too great an opportunity to do so much work and spend so much money to “drop the ball” on this day! Our goal is to have every portion of that service focused on faith and Holy Ghost.

First of all, insure all those who are responsible for executing this special service are at church and on post at least one hour before the service starts (ushers, greeters, hosts and hostesses, parking lot attendants, nursery workers, Sunday School staff, musicians, audio-visual staff, praise singers, service leaders, ministerial staff, Pastor).

Before The Service

The following are some suggestions that will help make this service more effective:

1. Have praise music playing softly in the background. This helps to set the atmosphere.
2. Assign your church leaders to walk around greeting the guests and church members. It will also be effective if the Pastor greets the guests, as well. Being personable to a guest will help them relate to you, especially if you are the one ministering in that service.
3. Insure that ushers, greeters, hosts, hostesses and parking lot attendants are carrying out their responsibilities, insuring every guest fills out a guest card. This is very important!

The Service

The service needs to be well planned and prepared. Every part of the service needs to blend and flow together. First of all, this service is not for the church member. The church member has come to minister, not to be ministered to. This service is for the guests. The objective of this service is to insure that *everyone who needs the Holy Ghost receives it*. Every part of the service needs to line up with the objective of the service. Let's discuss each part of the service:

Songs -- Songs that are sung before service (with praise singers), during the song service and any special singing needs to compliment the objective of the service. Sing songs of praise and worship, songs that inspire faith and lead people into the presence of God. This is a Holy Ghost service! We don't want to sing songs that do not relate. The preacher will be preaching about the Holy Ghost. We don't want to sing songs about the rapture or songs that speak directly from a saved person's point of view. Our objective is for everyone to relate and participate in this time of worship.

Scripture reading -- scripture reading should be relevant to receiving the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:1-4 or Luke 11:9-13 would be appropriate scriptures to read.

Prayer request and offering -- the individual administering the prayer or offering makes comments or reads scriptures that inspire faith

Testimonies -- It is strongly recommended that no one testifies during this special service. This can open a door for someone who is not a member to say things that may distract from the objective. If you do have a testimony service, pick the people ahead of time that you know will testify

properly, and advise them to tailor their testimony to be positive and to reinforce the objective of people receiving the Holy Ghost.

Sermon -- objective is to assist prepared guests to receive the Holy Ghost, so the message needs to be evangelistic in nature. The message should inspire faith in the hearts of people. *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* The message should include instructions on how to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The Altar Service

It would be contradictory to preach about the Holy Ghost and not give people an opportunity to receive it. There must be an altar service. Insure the speaker is creative on how to get those who need the Holy Ghost to the altar.

Altar workers need to be attentive so they can move right in and work the altars. All the altar workers should have already been trained to know what to do.

When a seeker receives the Holy Ghost, the altar worker signals the speaker. The speaker announces it publicly, helping to inspire faith in saints and other seekers.

After receiving the Holy Ghost, new converts are taken to a separate room where water baptism is explained by a minister or knowledgeable saint. An altar card should be filled out for each recipient. Inform them of and encourage them to attend the discipleship course and other ministries of your church, and offer them a Home Bible Study. Putting tracts and other materials in their hands about their new walk with God is also very effective. As much as possible, provide them with a packet to take home that includes the following:

1. A one- or two-day Home Bible Study (i.e., "The New Birth Experience")
2. A brochure about the discipleship course
3. A brochure about Home Bible Studies
4. A church business card
5. Tracts regarding salvation
6. A flyer or brochure advertising the many ministries your church has to offer

Celebration

Take some time to celebrate what God has done. Many times we tend not to celebrate our victories. A lot of time, effort and money have been put into this drive to insure its success -- it's been successful, so rejoice!

The Pastor should celebrate with the leaders. If you have Sunday evening service it is helpful to designate it as a Celebration Service. Oh, how God delights when his people give Him glory and honor in the spirit of praise and thanksgiving!

Follow-up

Now it's time to ensure these newborn babes in Christ are nurtured spiritually. Follow-up is a *must*. Now the hard work really begins! The goal of the follow-up team is "turning first-timers into full-timers". The following are some suggestions on conducting effective follow-up:

1. A letter from the pastor should be sent to each recipient rejoicing with them over what God has done in their life.
2. A phone call from a church member for the pastor should be made early in the week.
3. A visit would be good, if feasible for your area, preferably by the church member who invited the recipient.
4. The New Comers' (or New Convert) Care Director should follow-up with a phone call to encourage the recipient to join the church's discipleship class.
5. The Home Bible Study Director, or their designee, should call to try to enroll them in a Home Bible Study.
6. If you have small groups or cell ministry, someone from a small group should be assigned the responsibility to follow-up on them and encourage them to join their small group.